

BEFORE THE FLORIDA JUDICIAL QUALIFICATIONS COMMISSION
STATE OF FLORIDA

CASE NO.: _____

INQUIRY CONCERNING A JUDGE

NO. 04-455, JUDGE JOHN R. SLOOP

_____/

NOTICE OF FORMAL CHARGES

TO: The Honorable John R. Sloop
County Court Judge
Seminole County Courthouse
301 N. Park Avenue
Sanford, Florida 32771-1292

and

P.O. Box 1825
Sanford, Florida 32772-1825

YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED THAT the Investigative Panel of the Florida Judicial Qualifications Commission, by a vote of not less than two-thirds of those members present at its meeting held in Tampa, Florida on March 11, 2005, pursuant to Rule 6(f), Florida Judicial Qualifications Commission Rules ("FJQCR"), as revised, and Article V, Section 12(b) of the Florida Constitution, that probable cause exists for formal proceedings to be instituted against you on the following charges:

1. On or about December 3, 2004, you issued arrest warrants for approximately 11 traffic defendants who had not answered your docket call, but who were in fact, properly in an adjoining courtroom pursuant to their summonses or the direction of the judicial deputy sheriffs or bailiffs. You were informed of the

circumstances, but nevertheless proceeded to have the arrest warrants carried out, and these defendants arrested, and you initially declined to release them. As a result, these traffic defendants remained in jail until their release was ordered by another judge. You then revisited your arrest warrants.

2. These instances are representative of your recurring pattern and practice of promptly signing arrest warrants when a Defendant does not answer the docket call, resulting in persons being wrongfully incarcerated.

3. In the cases of State v. Ramos, (Case No.: 04-002343-CFA) and State v. Jones, (Case No.: 04-8388-MMA), you declined to release a defendant pursuant to the clear mandate of Florida Rules of Criminal Procedure 3.134, thereby requiring the defendant's release pursuant to a writ of *habeas corpus*.

The acts described above, if they occurred as alleged, were in violation of Canons 1, 2A, and 3(B)(2) and (8) which are applicable to you as a judge.

These acts, if they occurred as alleged, would impair the confidence of the citizens of this state in the integrity of the judicial system, and in you as a judge, would constitute conduct unbecoming of a member of the judiciary, would demonstrate your present unfitness to hold the office of judge, and would warrant discipline, including, but not limited to remand, fine, suspension with or without pay, and/or your removal from office.

Please take notice, in accordance with the FJQC Rules, as revised, that you have twenty (20) days following service of this notice to file a written answer to these charges. The original of your response and all subsequent pleadings must be filed with the Clerk of the Florida Supreme Court, in accordance with the Court's requirements, you must simultaneously file a DOS formatted three and one-half (3½") diskette in WordPerfect 5.1 (or higher) format. Copies of your response should be served on the undersigned Special Counsel and all persons (other than your counsel) listed in the certificate of service below.

Dated this _____ day of March, 2005.

By: _____

Lauri Waldman Ross, Esq.
Florida Bar No. 311200
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Special Counsel for the Florida
Judicial Qualifications Commission

-and-

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General Counsel for the Florida
Judicial Qualifications Commission

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I HEREBY CERTIFY that a true and correct copy of the foregoing Notice of Formal Proceedings has been furnished by certified mail, return receipt requested this _____ day of April, 2005 to:

The Honorable John R. Sloop
County Court Judge
Seminole County Courthouse
301 N. Park Avenue
Sanford, Florida 32771-1292

The Honorable John R. Sloop
County Court Judge
Seminole County Courthouse
P.O. Box 1825
Sanford, Florida 32772-1825

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LAURI WALDMAN ROSS, ESQ.